

church. Sister Riley's five dollar pledges for the the ological fund, is, I believe, a fair indication of the general spirit among the members here.

The regular union Thanksgiving services of Goshen Thursday morning, followed by a short visit at my mother's aunt, the meetings and kind hospitality in the homes of both Sister Keller and Sister Riley, are some of the enjoyable things that I can only mention as the team is waiting to take me to the two o'clock meeting at Paris.

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## Our Young People

TEACH US TO PRAY—Luke 11:1-18

Topic for Dec. 17

Prayer has been called "the lost art." It is far from being so, yet it is far from having the place in the lives of Christians that it ought to have. As the world progresses in spirituality and in the knowledge of God it ought to increase in knowledge of how to commune with God and co operate with him in his will for us. It is wrong to suppose that God favored the past more than the present or some persons more than others in his answers to prayer. He is no respecter of persons, but in every nation under heaven and in every age of human history he hears the cry from the obedient soul.

Prayer was originally connected with sacrifice and came to be offered in special places but no one ever taught men to pray as Jesus taught his disciples.

He himself carried out in his example every precept which he taught to his disciples and since he could say "I know that thou hearest me always" he is best qualified of all men to teach the secret of prevailing prayer. We could spend many hours over the Bible teaching of the subject but for this special lesson perhaps we can do no better than study the example of Jesus in prayer. If we then follow his example we may expect to find his teaching verified in our experience.

(TO THE LEADER—Along with references to the example of Jesus are placed in brackets references to the teaching on the point. These are for private study and to be used in the meeting only if time permits.)

1. Alone with the Father in prayer. Luke 11:1; Matt. 14:23. This means that when we shut the closet door we are to shut out thoughts of the world as well as the sight of it.

2. Obedience and prayer. John 8:29; John 17:4; (I John 3:22; Jas. 5:16; John 14:16, 21, 23; 15:16) Obedience is the key to prevailing prayer. Given obedience and all other conditions follow. Let some one show that because Christ could say John 8:29 he could also say John 11:42.

3. Faith in prayer. John 11:42; (Mk. 11:24; 9:23; I John 5:14, 15; Heb. 11:6) Faith in the promise ought to be easy when the promiser is God.

4. Love and prayer Luke 23:34; (Mk. 11:25; Matt. 5:24; 18:35; Eph. 4:32) No one can approach God in the right spirit who thinks of any man in the wrong spirit nor can he ask anything according to his will if he refuses to submit to any known part of that will.

5. Earnestness in prayer. John 11:33, 41; Luke 22:44; Luke 4:2. Most of our prayers are in such haste that we do not show a real desire for the things we ask.

Question. What help is fasting to prayer? Matt. 17:19-21. "Fasting is leaving go of the world; faith is laying hold of God."—Murray.

6. Perseverance in prayer. Luke 6:12. (Luke 18:1-9.) Discuss the thought that it is important instead of saying hastily "If it be thy will" to rather pause to "hear what God shall speak" and learn

what is his will and then ask with persistence and faith. Ps. 85:8.

7. Definiteness in prayer. Luke 22:32. (Mk. 10:51; Luke 18:41.) If we first get right with God so that we ask according to his will we need not fear to be definite. Let there be testimonies as to experiences with answers to definite prayers.

8. Self-surrender in prayer. Luke 22:42; (Jas. 4:2, 3) God does not answer selfish prayers. He is consistent with his attributes and must work only what is for the good. What are the objects of prayer in John 17. Show that because Jesus said "not what I will" (Mk. 14:36) he could also say "I will." John 17:24.

9. The abiding in God or the constant spirit of prayer. John 17:19-21. (John 15:7-10; I Thess. 5:16, 17) Not spasmodic, selfish outcry in time of trouble is prayer, but a life of reverent obedience and constant trust. This gives power as an engine with steam always up is ready with power when it is wanted quickly. Show how I Cor. 7:24 may be fulfilled.

10. The Spirit helps. Rom. 8:26.

11. Jesus helps. Heb. 7:25.

12. Prayer in Jesus' name. John 14:13; 16:23. Show the wonderful possibility in a life of prayer and union with Christ as shown by John 17:26. Have silent prayer or let the leader suggest things to pray for while all heads are bowed.

C. F. YODER.

### DISCOURAGEMENT—WHY NOT HOPE?

GEO. C. CARPENTER

What is discouragement? It is a lack of complete unfailling trust in the Almighty God. Almighty! Think of it. The God who is the creator and giver of every good and perfect gift, the God with whom things impossible with man are made possible, the God who ever loves and watches over his own, why with such a God for us and with his blessed word, containing no less than 31,000 precious promises, why should we not have a complete unfailling trust, a simple childlike faith in God, a sturdy belief in his word, a childlike confidence and trust even as rests on mother's word?

To every individual of every generation, at some time, come sorrow and trouble, which, if we have not on the "full armor" will tend to discourage us. "But," says Dr. Cuyler, "the one thing we want to learn is that the God who 'did it' is not a blind tyrant, but a wise, tender, loving Father." For we can bear almost anything if we are sure that love is behind it, and if we realize that "the fairest joys bloom where the bitterest tears have fallen."

But the best prohibiter and dispeller of discouragement is Christian's hope, founded on God's gracious promises. Hope gives pleasure and joy because we hope for that which is obtainable, for that which is priceless, for the longest, widest and most valuable object possible to hope for—eternal life. The Christian's hope is a source of ineffable happiness. He has at his disposal all of God's golden promises, of which the Bible is full, and which are as many checks on the bank of heaven. Lofty as the love of God and ample as the wants of man are the promises of God. There is scarcely a possible experience in the life of a soul but has its sustaining promise. Why be discouraged then?

"Let us then be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate,  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait."

Paul exhorts us to hope continually and to be not weary in well-doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

A good motto for every Christian in time of trouble is the favorite promise of the old colored woman, who, when asked her most precious Bible promise, after some hesitation and thought, answered, "Grin and bear it." Altho the words are not in the Bible, the spirit of them is. It is what Christ would have us do. He wants us to be happy in his service. It is the only way we can find joy and satisfaction here on earth. For the man who seeks only after material things never finds that peace of the soul, and that personal, intimate, comforting fellowship, the divinest things promised by the Master. Said a noted Englishman, "The child who runs after the rainbow, expecting at its end to find a pot of gold, is not so bitterly disappointed as the man who runs after the pot of gold, expecting to find resting upon it the rainbow of joy and satisfaction." The Christian, who has that love which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, in whose heart the peace of God rules, in whose daily life discouragement is left behind, is the one who finds life worth living.

"Things which are seen are temporal but things which are not seen are eternal." Only what we have wrought into character can we take away with us. We ought to thank God that he does not measure our lives in dollars and cents, tho it would be profitable to some if he did. A life, that triumphs in the little things of the common hours, that is willing to help bear a brother's burden, is a power for good in this world. For the Christian is the only Bible that the world reads. Triumphant in little things is one safeguard against discouragement.

"O small beginnings, ye are great and strong,  
Based on a faithful heart and weariless brain.  
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong,  
Ye earn the crown and wear it not in vain."

Triumphant in little things will sprinkle flowers of love about us and shed the sunshine of peace o'er our minds.

A good motto for every boy and girl working for Jesus is this, "Always keep sweet and go on shining." It may not be easy at first, but it is Christ's way, and makes a very lovely life. Habits formed in youth often go with us thru life, so if the boys and girls the wide world round, would form that habit of "keeping sweet and going on shining," it would make their lives flowing fountains of good, ever sending forth the crystal spray of happiness and helpfulness, even unto old age.

An encouraging motto for every teacher, leader and worker in His vineyard is the words of the prophet Daniel, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."